

VetSurgeon.org Jobs

Maximising the response to your veterinary recruitment advertising.

On 30th March 2016, VetSurgeon.org carried out a survey amongst its members to try and help inform practices about how best to maximise the results of their recruitment advertising.

139 veterinary surgeons took part, describing themselves as having recently looked for a job, or actively looking for a job, or could imagine looking for a job in the foreseeable future.

These are the conclusions of the survey. It's worth pointing out that whilst some of them might seem a bit self-evident, what is more instructive here is the order in which various responses were ranked.

In short, it's a numbers game, and the more people you can appeal to, both in terms of where you place your advert and the words you use in it, the greater the chance of success.

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Advertise Online

Nearly 70% of respondents said they were likely to spend most time browsing for jobs online, as opposed to magazine classifieds. Arguably this result may be skewed by the fact that the survey was carried out online. But who isn't, these days?

We say: OK, so we have a vested interest in this one. Still, the numbers speak for themselves. If you want to get the biggest bang for your buck, advertising online is clearly the place to do it. And where better than in front of the biggest online community of veterinary surgeons in the UK: VetSurgeon.org Jobs.

Location, location, location

When asked how far from where they currently live that they would be prepared to work, 39% said no more than 15 miles (30 minutes travel) and 72.5% said no further than 30 miles away (one hour's travel).

How far from where you currently live would you be prepared to work?	
Up to 15 miles away (or 30 minutes travel)	39.4%
Up to 30 miles away (or 1 hour's travel)	33.1%
Up to 45 miles away (or 1.5 hour's travel)	3.2%
I would be happy to relocate up to 100 miles away	2.4%
I would be happy to relocate up to 200 miles away	2.4%
I would be happy to relocate anywhere in the UK	7.1%
I would be happy to relocate anywhere in the world	12.6%

We say: Again, this presents a strong case for advertising online, where technology allows the jobseeker to search geographically so much more easily than they can when looking through classifieds in a magazine. VetSurgeon.org also allows jobseekers to subscribe for email alerts when an opportunity arises in a specific area.

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Play to your strengths

We asked respondents to rank various job attributes in terms of their importance. This was a pre-selected list, so does not allow for the fact that there might be other, more important job attributes or that the least highly ranked are almost completely unimportant.

Job attribute	Score	Rank
Work-life balance (flexible hours or part-time)	1292	1
The clinical facilities and equipment (digital x-ray, ultrasound etc.)	1152	2
Close-knit working team	1102	3
Opportunity to learn and develop	1080	4
Salary	1073	5
Working environment (the practice building)	884	6
Holiday entitlement	818	7
Type of clients	707	8
The local environment (ie a good part of town or beautiful countryside)	670	9
Bonus scheme or profit share	461	10
Opportunity to progress to clinical directorship	423	11
Accommodation	244	12

We say: You need to craft your advert to meet the hopes and expectations of the largest number of candidates. So, if you think the list is a reasonably sound one, you should compose your advert to lead on your highest placed strengths.

In other words, if you offer a good work-life balance, then that's the thing to lead on. If you work your staff like slaves, then you need to highlight the next highest placed thing: clinical facilities. And if you work your staff like slaves *and* you're based in a car park, then it's the close-knit team you need to emphasise. And so on.

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One thing worth highlighting: most of the job attributes in this list can be clearly and unambiguously demonstrated in an advert. The exception is the close-knit working team. As one respondent commented: “A lot of adverts say there is a good working team, but when you arrive, you find it is anything but.”

So if you really do enjoy a good atmosphere at the practice, it may be worth giving thought to how you can convey this more convincingly than just saying: ‘good working team’. Consider getting an endorsement or two from your staff about how well everyone gets along with each other. Perhaps ask all staff to rate the teamwork out of five stars, and then display the result in your advert (Rated by employees as 4.5 stars out of 5 for teamwork).

Show the team!

When asked which type of image they would find most compelling when used to illustrate a job advertisement, the largest percentage (33.1%) said ‘a photo of the team I’ll be working with’, with ‘the practice logo’ in second place at 23.6% (that was a surprise - who would have thought a practice logo could be described as ‘compelling’?).

When browsing a list of jobs, what photograph used to illustrate a job advertisement are you likely to find MOST compelling or interesting, and would cause you to click for further info?	
A photograph of the team I’ll be working with	33.1%
The practice logo	23.6%
A photograph of some of the clinical facilities / equipment at the practice	19.7%
A photograph of the practice building	15%
A photograph of a banana (or something else completely unrelated, but eye-catching)	4.7%
A photograph of the local village/town/city	3.9%

We say: VetSurgeon.org allows you to display both your practice logo and a photograph of the team. And if you haven’t got either of these things, get your smartphone out and take a snap of the 3rd placed option, the clinical facilities or some of the equipment at the practice.

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Out-of-hours

43.3% said they'd be prepared to do 1 in 10 to 1 in 5. 8.7% said they'd be happy to do 1 in 5 to 1 in 2. But with 48% of respondents saying they are not prepared to undertake *any* out-of-hours work, you obviously have a clear advantage if you outsource.

We say: This survey did not investigate any correlation between gender or practice type (farm or companion animal), so the result needs to be treated with caution. Nevertheless, if you don't outsource your OOH, you might be best advised to keep shtum about it until you've had the chance to explain all the other benefits of working for you.

The best words to use?

We asked respondents to describe their perfect job in three adjectives or short sentences. We've pulled out the adjectives to produce a 'word cloud' in which the most frequently used adjectives are the biggest (see next page).

The full list of perfect job descriptions is in the appendix at the end of this report.

We say: Obviously if everyone describes their practice as 'friendly', it's going to lose its impact. So this list shouldn't be read too prescriptively. It's more for inspiration.

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Appendix 1. The Perfect Job

- 30 hour week. Majority felines. Some management
- A supportive practice. Friendly team.
- Advanced techniques, referral centre, career progression
- Balanced friendly fun
- Be your own boss!
- Busy, varied caseload, gold-standard.
- Caring team. Work-life balance. Happy clients
- Clean, caring, small
- Clinical freedom, friendly team, week on-week off
- Enthusiastic team, good work life balance
- Exotic, varied, exciting
- Experienced team to learn from. Forward-thinking. No OOH
- Flexible hours, friendly team, well-managed practice
- Forward-thinking, client-focused, fun
- Friendly. Relaxed. Professional.
- Friendly, helpful staff, well-equipped
- Friendly practice, good clinical standards, part time hours
- Friendly team, flexible hours, clinical freedom.
- Friendly, good communication, good work life balance
- Friendly, good work life balance, rewarded for hard work
- Friendly, organised, relaxed
- Friendly, progressive, gold-standard
- Friendly, supportive & appreciative
- Friendly, supportive, progressive
- Good work-life balance, feel part of a team, learning opportunity
- Genuine, caring colleagues. Good work-life balance. Affordable care for clients.
- Gold standard, dedicated team, better work life balance
- Good learning environment, great colleagues and team, good pay and work/life balance
- Good rewards. High practice standards. Patient continuity
- Good team environment
- Good work environment, patients within my comfort zone, motivating salary
- Good working environment. Not overselling.
- High standard of care, leadership, hospital

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- Highly qualified team; opportunity to progress as clinician; good environment among colleagues.
- Honest compassionate teamwork
- Interesting, well paid, work-life balance good
- Large vet team, 6 weeks holiday, advance diagnostics
- Lucrative, engaging, rewarding
- Modern, supportive, well-paid.
- Nights well-paid, blocks of shifts
- No job is perfect
- No on call, no weekends
- No ooh, fairly split shifts, happy team
- No weekends. Friendly, fun team. Great pay!
- One week out of three night and weekend work on a self employed basis
- Opportunity to progress
- Part time, good team, no OOH
- Part time, local, occasionally challenging
- Part time, progressive support, good clients
- Part time, team, opportunities to progress
- Possibilities, good working environment, prof. stimulating
- Progress to partnership. proactive, collaborative team. Excellent client care and communication
- Reliable partners, chance to improve, good quality of life (not too heavy working shifts)
- SA: 2 to 3 mornings a week up to 4 hrs consider 1:4 Sat am
- Sensible hours. Good team.
- Small animal practice, personal approach, good communication
- Small animal, good work life balance, challenging
- Somewhere with honest employers that care about their staff, animals and clients
- Stimulating work environment, enthusiastic colleagues, also enough down time.
- Stress-free, well paid, fulfilling
- Supportive colleagues and clients, work life balance
- Supportive practice, team players, limited OOH
- Supportive, friendly, clinical freedom
- Supportive, friendly and caring
- To be employed is not to be owned.

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- Varied case load who good work life balance
- Well-equipped, good working hours, nice team
- Well remunerated, high standards, clean
- Work life balance, able to progress, appreciative /supportive management
- Work life balance, good team, opportunity to learn
- Work/life balance, colleagues, salary
- challenging, fulfilling, absorbing
- challenging, respectful, good income
- challenging, rewarding, fun
- client driven, latest clinical practice/development, team
- clinical excellence, good team, recognition and utilisation of my abilities
- clinical freedom, part time, friendly team
- close knit team with good fair rota and reliable equipment
- ethical in outlook; friendly to all; supportive
- flexible, opportunity to progress with fair remuneration
- friendly, proactive, progressive
- friendly, team, development, good salary
- friendly, well-paid, equipped
- friendly, professional
- fun, friendly, relaxed
- good leadership, clinical freedom, enough time off
- high paid, low stress, high reward!
- independent practice. No ooh. Work/life balance.
- interesting stimulating supportive
- interesting with no OOH
- modern, progressive and friendly
- much much more money
- no on call, decent clients, friendly workmates
- not stressful, not corporate, no out of hours, not money driven
- professional, current, fun
- rewarding demanding enjoyable
- rewarding, career development/progression, fun
- specialist of health protection dogs and cats; ophthalmologist,
- stimulating, fairly paid, good staff morale
- stimulating; fulfilling; rewarding
- supportive, friendly, respectful
- supportive, caring, client-focused
- supportive, flexible, reasonable

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- supportive, well paid, no on call.
- team atmosphere, care for clients, respect to personal life
- team work, open minded and high standards
- variable, allowance to learn and develop skills, motivation pack
- welcoming stimulating rewarding
- well-equipped, well trained, good income
- well-paid, no on-call, relaxed atmosphere
- work life balance
- Friendly nurses, experienced vets to learn from and boss committed to best practice; flexible/accommodating rota to allow a bit of a life as well!
- Part time flexible hours. Supportive environment and nice colleagues. realistic use of time ie not hugely overbooked all the time
- One that fits with being a mum; one that lets me use my 2 post grad certificates; supportive bosses and colleagues
- Where I'm looked after so I can look after others. overtime prevented. Mental health/wellbeing taken care of
- Knowledgeable team, fun work environment, good work life balance, appreciation freely given to employees!
- Kept busy but not stressed, good working environment/team with different levels of experience/interests, organised
- Multi vet, small animal, willing clients, inclusive enthusiastic staff, good facilities and equipment, ongoing learning encouraged
- Referral work, academic environment with the opportunity to balance between research, clinical and teaching opportunities. Somewhere prepared to support growth and develop a career.
- Good team/efficient/friendly/professional/good location/good reward system/good charge structure/good client handling